

The Social Science Bulletin
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at
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~~THE~~ THE ROLE OF THE ELECTORATE IN THE MISSISSIPPI COUNTY
by
Gordon K. Bryan

THE PLOUGHMAN'S DREAM: THE ANTECEDENTS OF MISSISSIPPI
STATE COLLEGE
by
John K. Bettersworth

THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE, 1950
by
R. J. Saville and J.V. Pace II
(an abstract)

ACTIVITIES

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SPECIAL NOTICE

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ROUND TABLE will hold its first meeting of the Spring Semester at the College Grill on Monday evening, February 6th at 6:30. The Library will provide the program for that occasion, the speaker being Dr. W. Stanley Hoole, Director of Libraries at Alabama, editor of the *ALABAMA REVIEW*, and author of a number of books and monographs. Dr. Hoole has recently completed the manuscript of a book on Simon Suggs, one of the important products of Southern folk humor. Dr. Hoole is to speak on some of the social implications of the humor of the Old Southwest..... Reservations at \$ 1.25 a plate may be made until noon Saturday, February 4th by contacting Donald Thompson, Ex. 278; J.K. Bettersworth, Ex. 264; or H.A. Pedersen, Ex. 254.

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The Role of the Electorate in the Mississippi County

by

Gordon K. Bryan

Department of History and Government

The county is an important unit in the conduct of elections and in the organization and operation of political parties in practically all sections of the country. It is an election district for the election, not only of county and local officers, but also for state and national officials, and serves as a representative district for members of the state legislature and for the selection of judges of the courts of the state. In these respects the county in Mississippi is no exception to the general rule, and any consideration of the government of the county would be incomplete without some attention to the electorate and the electoral function.¹

Every inhabitant of the State, except idiots and insane persons, who is a citizen of the United States and at least twenty-one years of age, and has resided in the State for two years and in the district for one year, who is able to read or understand any section of the constitution of the State when read to him, who shall have registered as provided by law, who has not been convicted of certain crimes, who has paid poll taxes for the two years preceding the election in which he offers to vote, is a qualified elector of his voting district.²

Conduct of Elections

General state elections are held by ballot in the several counties on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the year 1931 and every four years thereafter. For the conduct of elections, a board of election commissioners of three persons is appointed in every county by the state board of election commissioners to serve for two years, one of the commissioners being designated to have the ballots printed and distributed in his county. Also, a registrar is appointed by the state board of election commissioners in the several counties, the clerk of the circuit court usually being designated to serve in that capacity.³

The election commissioners for the county meet at the courthouse on the first Monday in October after their appointment and remain in session to hear and determine all appeals from the decision of the registrar in allowing or refusing to allow persons to register as voters. They are supposed to meet in March each year to revise the registration and poll books, but this is grossly neglected. In none of the counties visited in the course of this study has a revision of the poll books been made in recent years.

Prior to every election the county election commission appoints at least three persons for each election district as managers of the election, and also an election bailiff to give police protection in the conduct of the election.⁴ The commissioners procure and distribute a sufficient number of ballot boxes to the election districts of the county and see that all necessary supplies for the conduct of the election are at hand.

Furthermore, the commissioners are required to place the names of all candidates

1 Since the Democratic Party has dominated the politics of the State, it is not deemed necessary here to dwell on the party organization in the county, although it is maintained to some extent very much as in all other states through party committees in the towns, cities, and precincts of the county.

2 Mississippi Code, 1942, Sec. 3235.

3 Ibid., Secs. 3235, 3237.

4 Ibid., Secs. 3226, 3246.

on the ballots when notified fifteen days before election day on nomination, petition, or request that they be candidates, and they follow the general form of the official ballot furnished by the secretary of state in preparing ballots. If ballots are lost or destroyed, they must furnish new ones and report the matter to the grand jury if they deem necessary.⁵

Upon receiving the election returns, the commissioners canvass them, ascertain and declare the results, and within ten days after the election, deliver a certificate of election to the successful candidates for county offices. They transmit to the Secretary of State a statement of the whole number of votes given each candidate for any office at the election.⁶ After each election, the commissioners make a list of all persons serving in any capacity during the election and who are entitled to compensation, certify to the correctness of the list, and file the same with the clerk of the board of supervisors. The commissioners also have duties relating to the holding of special elections to fill vacancies in county offices.

Absentee voting was again legalized in 1944 after having been abolished in 1932. Under present regulations, the election commissioners of the county must furnish, within at least ten days prior to any election, a sufficient number of absentee ballots for the use of all voters who have properly applied for them. The restoration of absentee voting was brought about largely because so many qualified voters who were in the armed services would otherwise be virtually disfranchised.

After the election the ballot boxes and other equipment used in the election are not removed from the polling places until the count is complete, but they are then delivered to the clerk of the circuit court for preservation. A statement of the results of the election in the election district must be certified and signed by the managers and clerks, and the poll books, tally sheets, list of voters, and ballot boxes, and ballots must be delivered to the commissioners of the election.⁹

Needless to say, there are many legal provisions pertaining to the conduct of elections and many officials participating which have not been mentioned. However, the above sketch will give some idea of the way in which the electorate is enabled to function. It should be noted that the primary elections are subject to many of the laws which are applicable to the general elections, and the procedure is much the same, with the county executive committee of the party performing many of the functions noted above as performed by the election commissioners in the general election. To be eligible to vote in the primary a person must be a qualified voter under the general law and also in accord with the party holding the primary within two years preceding the primary.¹⁰ The dates for primaries are the first Tuesday after the first Monday in August for the first primary, and the second primary is held three weeks thereafter.¹¹ The Democratic Primary in Mississippi is tantamount to election because of lack of any real opposition in the general elections.

Functions of the Electorate

Certain legislative or quasi-legislative functions are vested in the electorate of the county by constitutional provisions. The removal of the county seat must be authorized by the electorate, creation of new counties requires approval of the electorate of the county, change of the boundaries of a judicial district in the county must be approved by the electorate, and the consent of the electorate is required for the consolidation of existing counties.¹²

Statutory law has enlarged the function of the county electorate in several instances by providing for initiative and referendum proceedings. When the board of supervisors receives a petition touching any matter concerning the entire county and over which it has jurisdiction signed by twenty-five per cent of the qualified voters

5 Ibid., Secs. 3250, 3263, 3275.

6 Ibid., Secs. 3279-3280.

7 Ibid., Sec. 3285.

8 Laws of Mississippi, 1944, Chapter 174.

9 Mississippi Code, 1942, Secs. 3249, 3278.

10 Ibid., Sec. 3109.

11 Ibid., Sec. 3109. During the war, the primaries were temporarily shifted to July with the second primary eight weeks later so the absentee ballots cast by voters in the armed forces might be counted in the election.

12 Constitution of Mississippi, Sec. 259, 260, 271.

of the county, the board must adopt such proposal or submit it to a special election; and, if the vote is favorable, the board must put the proposition into effect.¹³ Also, the board must call a special election on the establishment or abolition of a county court on petition of ten per cent of the qualified voters, and on petition of twenty per cent for establishing or abolishing the office of county attorney.¹⁴

Other matters which must be submitted to the electorate for approval include the creation, alteration, or abolition of consolidated school districts, insuing bonds for agricultural high schools and abolishing such schools, levying a tax for extension of the school term, establishing and supporting a junior college, establishing and supporting a county-municipal hospital, incurring interest-bearing debts except in anticipation of taxes, issuing highway bonds, and certain regulations pertaining to special road districts.¹⁵ These are only a few of many such provisions requiring action by the electorate.

In addition to these general provisions the Legislature has made numerous specific extensions of the privilege of initiative and referendum for counties. Actions covered by these provisions fall into three general classes: (1) actions by the board of supervisors that must be submitted to the electorate for final authorization; (2) actions that may be undertaken only upon initiation by the electorate; (3) actions of the board that must be brought before the electorate only if a protesting petition is presented.

Size of the Electorate

Perhaps the most significant single factor limiting the number of qualified voters and the number actually voting is the constitutional requirement that every voter be able to read any section of the Constitution of the State, or to understand it and give a reasonable interpretation of it. The registrar is forbidden to list any person as a qualified voter who cannot satisfy this requirement. The effect of this and other qualifications for voting upon the size of the electorate is indicated in Table VII. Of course, because of indifference and a number of other reasons, many eligible voters make no attempt to exercise their privilege.

The result of this situation is that in many counties popular government actually goes by default; and the role of the electorate in selecting elective officers and participating, through the initiative and referendum, in the determination of policy is left in the hands of a rather small per cent of the adult population. Under such circumstances, politicians and officials of the county are often able to perpetuate themselves in office or to get policy decisions to their liking by influencing a relatively small number of voters.

TABLE VII - SIZE OF ELECTORATE IN SELECTED MISSISSIPPI COUNTIES

County	Population, 1940 ^a		No. Reg. Voters, 1947 ^b	No. Voting in Dem. Primary, 1947 ^b
	Total	21 years and over		
Adams	27,238	16,709	6,458	3,125
Coahoma	48,333	28,846	6,909	3,295
Harrison	50,799	31,348	25,173	12,218
Hinds	107,273	65,393	24,703	17,143
Lauderdale	58,247	34,821	22,310	10,586
Lee	38,838	21,868	15,504	8,949
Marion	24,085	12,682	8,110	5,599
Marshall	25,522	13,119	4,458	3,255
Oktibbeha	22,151	11,362	5,361	3,690
Scott	23,144	11,963	7,334	5,077
Tallahatchie	34,166	18,377	6,321	4,072
Warren	39,595	25,576	11,336	5,800

a Compiled from Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Vol. I, Population, pp. 570-573.

b Data secured from personal interviews with state and county officials.

¹³ Mississippi Code, 1942, Sec. 3018.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Secs. 1618, 3911.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Secs. 6274, 6466, 6518, 6475, 3002, 4320, 8361, 8382.

The Electoral Process in Practice

From the numerous constitutional and statutory provisions for action by the county electorate, one might conclude that the voter is constantly at the polls. Such, of course, is not the case. In actual practice, special action by the electorate is rather infrequent. The only instances of such action during the past years 1946-1948 in the counties studied were for the purpose of filling vacancies in elective offices, issuing road and school bonds, or other similar purposes; and even these occasions were comparatively infrequent.

Seldom, indeed, is the petition device used to force the board of supervisors to call special elections. In fact, the board is usually only too happy to pass the responsibility for unusual actions to the electorate whenever it is feasible to do so. Nevertheless, the very existence of the possibility for the electorates to take the initiative and force the hand of the board or to nullify its actions mitigates against the development of effective administrative leadership on the part of the constituted authorities. This is one factor which makes difficult the fixing of responsibility for public policy.

The role of the electorate in controlling governmental policy would probably be more extensive were it not for the strong political following usually possessed by the board members and other elective county officials. The net result of this state of affairs is that often, instead of the voters controlling the officials, the officials control the voters. This paradoxical situation is easier to comprehend when one recalls that all county officials are elected for a four-year term; and, except for the sheriff, there is no limit on the number of terms a person can hold. There is ample time and opportunity, therefore, for the official to build his political machine to formidable proportions. This, also, helps to explain the utter futility of attempting effective control of county administration by legislative enactments and through action by the electorate. Yet, this is precisely the form of control over local affairs which has been relied upon since pioneer days in many states, including our own.

Studies of Southern State Resources Planned

(From: Regional Action in Higher Education, January, 1950)

What the South is a half century from now may be determined in a great measure by a South-wide project scheduled to start in 1950. One of the broadest surveys ever undertaken in the South has been authorized by the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education. It will be a survey to produce on one side a comprehensive picture of the region's resources and opportunities for economic improvement and industrial and agricultural growth, and on the other, the needs for trained and educated manpower to produce the development.

The state-by-state studies will involve dozens of citizens. Their results will provide a realistic background against which educational programs can be developed. Together, the studies on natural resources, industrial prospects, population distribution, and social needs will delineate the similarities and differences running through the Southern states, thereby giving regional strength to any action prompted by the reports.

The surveys were approved by the Board at its November meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. The proposal for them was based on this premise — that "highly trained leaders and sound research are indispensable to the progress of the southern states in utilizing their resources to the fullest and achieving higher levels of social and economic development." Under the approved plans, the studies will be outlined and supervised in each state by a commission to be appointed by the Governor of the state some time during the spring. The commission will include industry and business representatives as well as research and education leaders and organizations.

The Board of Control and its staff will provide general coordinating and advisory services for the state commissions. It also will provide technical assistance of competent consultants from throughout the region.

THE PLOUGHMAN'S DREAM: The Antecedents of Mississippi State College

by
John K. Bettersworth

Mississippi State College has always been in a very real sense a product of its time. In fact, its establishment was the culmination of a series of developments that could have had no other result than the creation of a "people's college," which, since most Mississippians of the last century were born and bred on the farm, must of necessity be to the manner born, - a farmer's college.

There is an uncomfortable irony in the fact that the American people who, until the last decades of the nineteenth century were predominately agricultural, should have been loathe to devote either their time or their funds to agricultural education. Thanks to the combined workings of an agricultural depression and a movement for scientific agriculture, which gained in popularity at the same time, a beginning was made in the 1840's and 50's in agricultural education as a means of saving the American farmer.

In Mississippi agricultural education was practically non-existent in slavery times except as a dream in the minds of a handful of progressive planters. Fittingly enough, our first state institution of higher learning, Jefferson College, was the scene of the birth of the first serious effort in Mississippi toward the improvement of our agriculture. Here in 1839 was born an "Agricultural, Horticultural, and Botanical Society," which did not limit itself to the college proper but welcomed all comers, most of them being Adams county gentry.¹ With B. L. C. Wailles as its president the society did much in a quiet way to promote agricultural progress, especially by sponsoring fairs for agricultural exhibits. That the society received any aid and comfort from the course of study provided at Jefferson College was, indeed, too much to expect. Yet, just as was the case when agitation began some forty years later to set up a state agricultural and mechanical college, the movement at Jefferson College found its origins at least in part in economic crises. The panic of 1837 had made farmers aware that all was not well in the Cotton Kingdom. As we shall see, the panic of 1873, aggravated by the economic chaos of Reconstruction, awakened farmers to the necessity for action four decades later.

One year after the planters formed their organization at Jefferson College, a State Agricultural Society was chartered. Although its fortunes waxed and waned, and at times the organization seems to have been at the point of collapse, it enjoyed a vigorous growth in the late 50's, when as an "Agricultural and Mechanical Society"² it attempted to ready the state for economic independence as the Civil War approached. The state itself always lent some assistance to the work of the society, particularly in appropriating money to assist state and county societies in the holding of agricultural fairs. Also, a state Agricultural Bureau was created to further the good work. By 1858 there were at least sixteen local societies in the state.³ That the agricultural society movement had any direct effect insofar as educating the farmer is concerned is problematical; but it is indeed significant that it was through the efforts of farm organizations similar to the old agricultural societies that the agricultural college movement gained momentum in the 1870's.

The prewar agricultural societies did not limit their attention to agriculture alone, for mechanical progress they felt to be no less vital than agricultural advancement, and the word "mechanical" eventually entered the nomenclature of these groups. At their fairs the societies exhibited not only the products of the field but also the products of alert and inventive minds who had put their wits into the making of all sorts of devices including meal-grinding machines and portable sawmills.⁴

1 C. S. Sydnor, A Gentleman of the Old Natchez District: B. L. C. Wailles, 152.

2 Ibid., 165, 169.

3 Ibid., 168.

4 Ibid.

The agricultural press, which flourished under the aegis of the agricultural societies, was devoted as loyally to mechanics as to agriculture. The Mississippi Planter and Mechanic, which was established in 1857 as a special project of the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical Society, reflects the broad interests of the sponsors, who felt that both agriculture and industry were essential to the economic progress of Mississippi. "How comfortable it would look," said the Planter and Mechanic in 1858, "and how comfortable it would feel to hear the hum of the spindles, the clatter of the loom, the ring of the anvil, the sound of the hammer, and the rumble of the flouring mills, adjacent to the board acres waving /swoosh/ with corn and cotton; bear the low of the herd as they come leisurely from the rich pastures to the call of the milkmaid; in a word, see within ourselves all the plenteous element of independence and thrift actively at work in our midst."⁶

In some parts of the United States the agricultural societies began to agitate for the establishment of colleges to educate the industrial classes as early as the 1810's, the movement receiving considerable support from the success of similar schools in Europe. Several Northern states actually set up colleges of this type, variously known as "Industrial," "Agricultural," or "people's" colleges. In Mississippi, however, agricultural education was all but non-existent during the antebellum period. There was, however, at the University of Mississippi a professor of "Geology and Agricultural Chemistry," who was ambitious enough to make a report on his work to the Legislature in 1852.⁷ There was even a course in the University catalog of 1853 for the edification of second semester seniors under the title, "Analytical Chemistry and Agriculture."⁸ Whether the course were offered, and if so, whether any of the students enrolled for it, we do not know. All that seems to have come of these early agricultural stirrings at the University was a series of reports on Mississippi geology, with special reference to soils for agricultural uses. In 1854 B. L. C. Waller made an initial report on the geology and agriculture of the state, to be followed by Lewis Harper in 1857 and Eugene W. Hilgard in 1858 and 1860. The work of Hilgard who later achieved considerable fame in California was valuable in laying the groundwork of an understanding of Mississippi's soil, a necessary step before any real work in the field of agricultural education could be undertaken.

Secession and war interrupted trends which might well have resulted in the introduction of an agricultural course in the University. Chancellor F. A. P. Barnard, who was a scientist himself, and took his stand beside those who desired "knowledge itself, for its uses," hoped to establish a school of agriculture at the University, and had Barnard remained at Oxford, this energetic and practical leader might have made good his plans, with the result that Mississippi A. and M. as a separate institution might never have been born. As it was, all that the state inherited from its prewar attention to scientific agriculture was the geological surveys mentioned above.

The preliminary groundwork in practical education in this country had to be performed by the states, and in the 1850's industrial schools were established by several Northern states.¹⁰ Nevertheless, it was to Federal largess that the advocates of agricultural and mechanical schooling inevitably turned. The intense state's rights attitude of Southerners more or less precluded agitation for Federal funds in the South in those days. Consequently, the impetus for a land-grant college idea came from the North. President James Buchanan, a "northern man with southern principles," vetoed the first such legislation in 1857. After 1860, the triumph of the Northern Republicans made inevitable the passage of some sort of land-grant college act. Under the leadership of Senator Morrill of Vermont legislation was finally approved in 1862. The Morrill Act was to have a far-reaching effect on American higher education. In the fullest sense of the term, the land-grant college was to the manner born—Engendered in an age of intense nationalism

5 J. K. Bettersworth, Confederate Mississippi, 131.

6 Mississippi Planter and Mechanic, II (1858), 153.

7 Report of the Professor of Geology and Agricultural Chemistry in the University of Mississippi, Jackson, 1852.

8 A. C. True, History of Agricultural Education in the United States, 161.

9 E. W. Hilgard, "A Historical Outline of the Geological and Agricultural Survey of the State of Mississippi," Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society, III (1911), 207-234.

10 U. S. Office of Education, Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, I, 4-5.

in the North whereby all but the remnants of particularism and state's rights were to be annihilated. The Land-Grant Act projected the Federal government irrevocably into the field of American higher education by providing financial support for industrial education.¹¹

Under the Morrill Land-Grant Act, each state was to receive either in land or in land scrip 30,000 acres for each senator and representative in Congress on the basis of the 1860 apportionment act. The proceeds from the land should become a permanent endowment to be held in tact and invested at not less than 5% interest, the yearly income from this endowment being used for the operation of an agricultural and mechanical college.¹² Because of the peculiarity of its original endowment an institution of this type soon came to be known as a "land-grant" college. It is, indeed, appropriate that the financial roots of the agricultural and mechanical colleges should have been literally set in the national soil. It is also worthy of mention in passing that, although we owe to the Republican party the credit for establishing the land-grant college, that party was doubtless responding as much to political pressure as to educational idealism in taking the fateful step; for its platform of 1860 had shrewdly committed the party to a policy of doing out the national soil gratis to practically all comers. Nevertheless, at this late date we need not trouble ourselves over motives, for few there be who would still question the end accomplished as anything desirable. For, certainly, it was high time that at least a pittance from the Federal bounty be diverted to that economic group who, after all, were the American people, the farmers.

No less significant of the entrance of the national government upon a program of subsidizing higher education was the academic objective of this new scheme. The land-grant college was supposed to teach, "without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, ... such branches of learning as are related to agricultural and mechanical arts in such a manner as the legislatures of the states may respectively prescribe in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life."¹³ Here was an educational aim which, if properly carried out, should have produced that "universal man" which educators since the age of the Renaissance humanist have been seeing through a glass darkly. For decades the land-grant college has been attempting to mold this man, at times going perhaps too far toward either one extreme or the other in seeking to fit the academic to the practical, but biding fair in our own day to marry the model with the man.

Although originally there were but two years in which to accept the provisions of the Morrill Act, Congress made several extensions of the deadline to accommodate late-comers, particularly the ex-Confederate states and new states eventually formed in the far west.¹⁴ Mississippi accepted on October 30, 1866; but as Congress did not regard the state as having been properly reconstructed at that time, the legislative action was held void.¹⁵ The "Black-and-Tan Convention" of 1868 enjoined the Legislature to provide for "an agricultural college or colleges" as soon as practicable; but it was not until May 13, 1871, that the Legislature acted. In characteristic fashion the carpet-bag Legislature of that time allotted three-fifths of the Morrill Act fund to Alcorn University for negroes, while only two-fifths were given to the University of Mississippi to provide agricultural and mechanical training for whites.¹⁶

The Mississippi share of Federal lands was 210,000 acres, supposedly worth \$1.25 per acre. Governor Alcorn disposed of this land in September, 1871, to George F. Lewis, of Cleveland, Ohio, at \$.90 per acre. The Governor deposited the proceeds with banks in New York and Ohio rather than in the State Treasury. Although the funds were supposed to be invested in bonds, Alcorn refused to act until he received legislative authorization.¹⁷

The 1872 Legislature hummed with rumors of scandal, particularly over the failure of the Governor to place the funds in the State Treasury. While an investigating committee dutifully whitewashed the carpet-bag administration, twenty representatives, most of them Democrats, signed a vigorous protest. There was also a minority report which the majority attempted to exclude from the Journal, only to

11 Ibid., 7-8.

12 Ibid., 8-9.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 9.

15 A. C. True, History of Agricultural Education, 160.

yield after thirty-six members signed a further protest.¹⁸ The handling of the land-grant funds continued for some years to stir up political animosity between the Democrats and Republicans in the state.

Coupled with the supposed frauds in connection with the investment of the land-grant endowment fund was the dubious role played by Ole Miss and a misuse of a portion of the fund by Alcorn University. As we have seen, Ole Miss was unable to attract agricultural students; it did not, however, hesitate to use its share of the land-grant income. Disgusted farmers were soon speaking contemptuously of the "side show established at Oxford."¹⁹

At Alcorn University the major scandal involved the expenditure of \$32,000 to purchase the lands and buildings of Oakland College, a defunct Presbyterian school. Under the Morrill Act under 10% of the original endowment might be employed for such a purpose. However, the state administration pointed out to critics that the \$32,000 came from accumulated interest rather than from the principal sum.²⁰

Although the Democrats complained bitterly in the 1870's, they themselves admitted that their remonstrances "might have well been addressed to a herd of wild buffalo as to the vandals who then had control of the state government."²¹ Actually, it would seem that although the carpet-baggers were guilty of a host of crimes, very little if any fraud took place in connection with the land-grant fund. All told the state received \$188,928.00 from the sale of land scrip.²² According to Alcorn, the figure was \$189,000.²³ Twenty-eight states, including Mississippi, disposed of their land at less than the prescribed \$1.25 per acre and only eighteen received more than that sum, most of the latter being new states who took advantage of subsequent price rises.²⁴ An examination of the record of other states indicated that Mississippi received better than the average when it disposed of its lands at \$.90 per acre.²⁵

As for the investing of the land-grant funds in Mississippi, terms were more favorable to begin with than they were later on. In 1872, Governor Powers invested the total fund in eight per cent state bonds, thereby increasing the total endowment to \$218,150.00. Investments made in 1874 added another \$9,000. In 1876 the total fund was finally invested at the minimum rate of five per cent in twenty-year state bonds.²⁶ By 1889 General Lee reported that the fund had risen to a total of \$227,160.00.²⁷

The story of the effort to give an agricultural and mechanical course at the University of Mississippi is brief and tragic. A department of agriculture was established in 1871 under the land-grant arrangement with Eugene W. Hilgard in charge. It will be recalled that Hilgard had worked on the state geological survey before the war, doing a very creditable job. In the 1871-1872 session Hilgard gave lectures on agriculture, and in the following year a full curriculum was set up under the School of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts. Hilgard worked diligently for the success of this venture in agricultural education. An adjunct professor of agriculture was added in 1872 in the person of Dr. M. W. Philips, who had already achieved fame as a scientific agriculturist and as editor of the Southern Farmer. Dr. Philips was also to be "Superintendent of the University Farm."²⁸ The farm consisted of one

18 Ibid., 353-373, 374.

19 Chickasaw Messenger, May 12, 1881.

20 M. S., Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Mississippi, December 14, 1878 (Hereafter cited as Minutes of the Board) Jackson Weekly Clarion, February 27, 1878.

21 M. S., Minutes of the Board, December 14, 1878.

22 Mississippi, House Journal, 1872, 352.

23 U. S. Office of Education, Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, 12-13.

24 Ibid., 10-11; M. S., Minutes of the Board, April 11, 1878.

25 M. S. Minutes of the Board, December 14, 1878.

26 S. D. Lee, The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Mississippi, Its Origin, Object, Management and Results, Discussed in a Series of Papers, 5.

27 University of Mississippi, Historical Catalogue (1899), 91; F. L. Riley, ed. "Diary of a Mississippi Planter," PWHS, X (1909), 303.

ninety acre plot enclosed with a "substantial plank fence with cedar posts," and another field of about 16 acres, which was planted in "cotton, corn, Hungarian grain, lucern, sweet and Irish potatoes," and other produce crops.²⁹ Also many flowers and fruit trees were soon set out. Although Philips worked faithfully the crop of students was utterly disappointing. In 1873 five students were enrolled in agriculture and mechanic arts; in 1874 there were but three, and these were probably in mechanic arts. In fact it was said that at no time were there more than twelve students taking the "scientific course." By 1874 Hilgard had decided to quit and leave the state.³⁰

Philips remained until 1876, when after a futile attempt to revive the agriculture course, the entire project was dropped by the Trustees and the farm abandoned. Philips himself became the Proctor of the University, in which capacity he supervised the landscaping of the campus.³¹ Meanwhile, a movement to establish a separate agricultural and mechanical college was gaining strength. In the late seventies the final step toward the creation of this college was to be taken.

29 J. M. White, "Origin and Location of the Mississippi A. & M. College," PHMS, III (1900), 345.

30 A. C. True, History of Agricultural Education, 163.

31 F. L. Riley, "Diary of a Mississippi Planter," PHMS, X (1909), 308; A. C. True, History of Agricultural Education, 163.

EXTRACTS AND ABSTRACTS

The Economic Outlook for Mississippi Agriculture

by

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NOTE: This article is an abstract of a study contained in the Mississippi Farm Research for December, 1949.

A decline in business conditions is probable in the year ahead. How much this will be depends largely on how well industrial output and employment are maintained and on the level of exports. Indications now are that the declines in these items will be small in 1950 compared to 1949. Relatively high levels of industrial output are indicated for 1950, especially the first half year, meaning high employment and high payrolls with large expendable income in the hands of consumers.

Heavy government expenditures for defense and for maintaining a strategic position in international affairs may be expected, though again these amounts will almost surely taper off from the level of the current year. Government aids to exports have created a strong export demand this year, but this too may be expected to drop slightly in 1950, and probably more sharply thereafter.

If automobile output, construction, and other heavy industries operate at high levels in 1950, the declines will be small, but to the extent that demands for these items are fully met, may we find supplies out-stripping demands and prices slipping.

The best guess would appear to be that only small changes in business activi-

ties are likely to occur and that the major changes will be on the downward side. There are strong forces to maintain good conditions, certainly by comparison with any pre-war standards. Unemployment has been tending down now compared to earlier this year. Business activity in several important industrial fields--textiles, construction, and automobiles--has shown surprising strength. There is still considerable purchasing power in consumer hands. The payment of National Life Insurance refunds will release additional funds. Federal spending will continue high and the budget deficit will not be covered by increased taxation. Thus, the consumers stand ready to take a large supply of goods off the market. This indicates that any price decline will encounter strong buying support at slightly lower levels.

A high level of economic activity is exceedingly important to Mississippi, especially the matter of ample domestic and export outlets for cotton. Any decline in economic conditions is apt to have relatively greater effects on Mississippi agriculture than in any other area, because we are so dependent on one major crop--cotton. However, business activities to maintain strong local demands for agricultural products are becoming increasingly more important to Mississippi farmers.

Farm prices and cash incomes to farmers depend most of all on spending money in the hands of non-farm workers. Thus, high factory payrolls, full employment, high industrial production, and large exports are necessary conditions for heavy demand for agricultural products. Since these are expected to be only slightly lower in 1950, it is probable that the demand for farm products will slack off somewhat. Thus if supplies of farm products do not become overly heavy in 1950, farmers can expect demand to hold price declines for farm products to relatively small amounts. Price supports will be available for many products as an additional factor limiting declines to farmers.

It is expected that prices of things farmers buy will not decline appreciably. Especially will the costs of distributing products between producers and consumers, in which labor costs play an important part, remain relatively high and comparatively fixed. This will mean sizeable reductions in farmers' net cash incomes in 1950 more than in proportion to unit price declines. Also, there seems to be rather clear indications that farmers will attempt high levels of production in 1950, so that, with normal growing conditions, relatively high supplies of farm products will again be available.

The situation in Mississippi agriculture is quite different in 1949 than for most areas of the United States. Due to very unfavorable conditions, especially for cotton, farm incomes are drastically reduced and the state declared to be a "disaster" area. Excellent production conditions in the Western areas for cotton on which Mississippi agriculture depends mainly, have resulted in relatively large supplies and lower prices at a time when Mississippi has a short supply. This adds greatly to the economic difficulty. The prospects for a more favorable situation in Mississippi in 1950 than in the United States generally, appears almost certain--barring of course another unfavorable growing year.

ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL SCIENCE ROUND TABLE ON FEBRUARY 6

The first spring meeting of the Social Science Round Table will be held in the College Grill at 6:30 P.M., Monday, February 6. Dr. W. Stanley Hoole will speak. For details turn to the second page of this issue of the Bulletin.

JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT INITIATED

A joint research project in "Local Government Reorganization" has been undertaken for the spring semester by the Department of History and Government and the Division of Sociology and Rural Life. Dr. Gordon K. Bryan, of the Department of History and Government, will serve as Project Leader, with Professor Augustin Magruder of the same department, and the research staff in Sociology and Rural Life as consultants.

DEPARTMENTAL COUNSELING FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE MAJORS IN EDUCATION

Beginning with the spring semester, a program of advisement for Social Science majors in the School of Education was initiated by Dean Brooks with the assistance of the various Social Science departments of the College. A Social Science representative was chosen by the several departments to sit with the Education School staff during registration for the purpose of assisting in the making out of course programs and schedules in Social Sciences. Professor Marion Loftin, of the Department of Sociology and Rural Life, and Dr. H. S. Snellgrove, of the Department of History and Government, were the representatives chosen for this project.

SOCIOLOGISTS PLAN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM

The Mississippi Rural Church and Community Planning Committee met at State College on December 15 to plan the church and community program for the Farm and Home Week to be observed here next summer, to plan development and encouragement of church and community leaders, and to launch an organization to work toward these objectives. Dr. L. O. Todd, president of the East Mississippi Junior College and chairman of the committee presided. Other members of the committee attending the meeting are as follows: Rev. J. Haden Lester, president of the French Camp Academy; G. M. Peery, secretary and director of the Mississippi Christian Churches of Jackson; George McLean, editor of the Tupelo Journal; Rev. Kenneth Hall of Kosciusko, Attala County Baptist pastor; Rev. E. D. Stidham of Corinth, executive of the Mid-South Synod of the Presbyterian Church; Rev. J. A. Lindsey, Jr., of Florence, chairman of the Rural Church Committee of the Mississippi Methodist Conference; and Rev. Carey Cox, pastor of the First Baptist Church of West Point. Local members of this committee are Dr. Harold Kaufman, head of the division of sociology and rural life; Henry T. Ware, general secretary of the State College YMCA; Professor Lee B. Gaither, head of the Resource-use education department; Dr. Fred W. Neal, professor of Philosophy and Religion; Miss Ruth Etheridge, Extension Service specialist in organization and program planning; Rev. Robert F. Sloop, pastor of the Starkville Presbyterian Church; Rev. Wilburn Smith, pastor of the Starkville Baptist Church; and Mrs. Homer Tate, teacher in the Starkville Methodist Sunday School. Special guests or consultants attending the meeting were Rev. Worth Tippy of Laurel, former executive of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ; Rev. J. T. Beale of Cleveland, rural church pastor; Rev. H. G. Williamson, Guntown pastor; and Rev. R. F. Roblin, pastor of the Siloam Baptist Church in Clay County.

THE DECEMBER CONVENTIONS

The annual Social Science professional conventions of December found the college staff well represented. Dr. H. F. Kaufman and Dr. and Mrs. H. A. Pedersen were in attendance at the sociological meetings at the New Yorker Hotel; Drs. J. K. Battersworth and Gordon K. Bryan attended the political science meeting at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York; Dr. J. K. Battersworth and Glover Moore were present at the American Historical Association meeting in Boston; and Dr. Fred W. Neal attended the meeting of the Church History Society in Boston. Dr. Moore took advantage of the occasion to do research in New York and Boston. Dr. Battersworth attended a special session of the Society for Business History while at Boston. While enroute homeward after the sociological meeting, Dr. Kaufman visited Cornell University to observe the sociological research facilities at that institution.

HEALTH PROJECT IN ANALYSIS STATE

The Mississippi Health project being conducted by the Division of Sociology and Rural Life at Mississippi State College, has progressed rapidly. Dr. Kaufman reports that the field work has now been completed and the work of analyzing data has been started. Professor Marion Loftin will devote his entire time to the health project during the spring semester.

LOOKING AHEAD IN 1950 RELEASED BY EXTENSION SERVICE

Looking Ahead in 1950 for Farm and Family Living, A Summary of the Farm and Home Outlook is the title of a booklet recently issued by the Mississippi State College Extension Service. A slight decline in business activity for the year is anticipated. High wages and GI insurance checks augur a high level of spending. For Mississippi a poor cotton crop and lower farm prices in general will doubtless mean a weakening of business activity.

MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE PLANNED

Plans for the Second Annual Mississippi Management Conference, to be held on March 23 and 24 at the Edwards Hotel in Jackson, have been announced by Professor J. J. MacAllister, head of the management department. Using the theme, "The Human Element in Management," the program will offer every one in attendance an opportunity to ask questions and secure information that will be useful in solving problems within his own plants.

The program, sponsored by the Student Chapter of the Society for Advancement of Management and the department of industrial management in the School of Business, will include such speakers as L. T. Hawley, Ph.D., associate professor of management, University of Alabama; and John Schulten, southern regional director, Department Store, Wholesale and Retail Store Workers of America, CIO, Birmingham. Their subject will be "The Ingredients of Workable Labor Relations." Samuel Lang, attorney, New Orleans, and W. S. Henley, attorney, Hazlehurst, will discuss the "Labor Lawyer's View of Current Management-Labor Relations." "The Price of Poor Employee Relations" will be discussed by C. G. Eubanks, plant manager, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Memphis, Tennessee; and Donald J. Rander, industrial relations manager, DeTourneau Company of Vicksburg. Other panel speakers include: Henry Haller, industrial relations manager, International Harvester, Memphis; Richard Stockham, president, Stockham Fittings and Valves, Birmingham; Henry G. Hodges, Ph.D., head of the department of management, University of Florida; C. A. Sullivan, attorney and management consultant, Jackson; Gus H. Ford, Mississippi School Supply, Jackson; A. A. Spencer, Southland Oils, Inc., Yazoo City; and Orrin Swayzee, vice president, First National Bank, Jackson.

ARTICLE DESCRIBES SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM AT UNIVERSITY

An article in Social Forces for October, 1949 on "The Sociology Curriculum" was written by Morton G. King, Jr., chairman, and Julien R. Tatum and John C. Belcher, department members, in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Mississippi. The article describes the procedure followed by Ole Miss during the past three years in working out curriculum problems in the Sociology field.

BARNARD AND CARTER ON PANEL DISCUSSION

Dr. W. H. Barnard, Professor of Education, and Dr. W. P. Carter, Professor of Sociology and Rural Life in charge of the Public Welfare Administration curriculum in the School of Business, will participate in a forum on parent-child relations to be held by the Starkville P.T.A. on February 9. Dr. Barnard will be the moderator, and Dr. Carter will discuss some aspects of the problem of the functions and responsibilities of parents.

SOCIOLOGISTS ATTEND WARNER LECTURE AT ALABAMA

Four members of the Division of Sociology and Rural Life here will attend a lecture at the University of Alabama on February 3 at 8:15 p.m. by Dr. W. Lloyd Warner, of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the University of Chicago. Dr. Warner is an assistant in American social class analysis and his research has received wide publicity in Life magazine. The State College visitors will be Drs. Harold F. Kaufman and Harold A. Pedersen and Professors Marion Loftin and Robert E. Galloway. Any other interested persons from State have been cordially invited to join the group. There will be a reception for the speaker and guests immediately after the lecture.

BRYAN AND MAGRUDER WRITE ARTICLE

Dr. Gordon K. Bryan and Professor Augustin Magruder, both of the Department of History and Government, are joint authors of a study of governmental reorganization with special emphasis on Mississippi, entitled, "Does Mississippi Need a Hoover Commission?" This study will appear in the Mississippi Farm Bureau News in the near future.

PEDERSEN CONTRIBUTES TO LIBRARY STUDY

Dr. Harold A. Pedersen has contributed a chapter on "Recent Population Trends in Mississippi" to a joint study of library facilities in Mississippi recently completed and published by the Bureau of Public Administration at the University.

STAFF CHANGES

Several staff changes have been made in the Department of Agricultural Economics. Edward S. Kern, Jr., comes from L.S.U. as assistant professor to replace B. K. Doyle, who resigned to join the P. M. A. in Washington. For the past year Mr. Kern has been research associate with the department of agricultural economics at L.S.U., where he received the M.S. degree last fall. His thesis was on Farmers' Produce Markets in Louisiana. Mr. A. C. Davis and Mr. L. B. Jenkins have been made acting instructors. Mr. Jenkins completed his M.S. work in January. Mr. A. J. Garbarino has also completed his M.S. work and is now with the Tennessee Experiment Station. Mr. R. W. Shaw has resigned his fellowship to join the Farm Credit Administration. Three new fellows have been appointed: Daniel K. Bryan, A. D. Seale, Jr., and William E. Hall.

MARKETING CHAPTER ORGANIZED HERE

The South's first chapter of the American Marketing Association was established at Mississippi State College recently. Professor C. H. Farnsworth, head of the marketing department, was named president of the Dixie Chapter, as the local unit was appropriately named. This chapter is the 31st to be organized in the United States. The purpose of the organization is to promote scientific study of marketing. Professor Chester M. Wells, Jr., of the agricultural marketing division was elected vice president. Professor Marvin Hoffman of the School of Business was elected secretary; and Professor W. E. Christian, Jr., of the agricultural marketing division was elected treasurer. Professor R. A. Klages of the Business School was chosen as corresponding secretary. Professor John A. Young of the Business School was chosen to head the program committee, Professor David J. Schwartz, Jr., of the School of Business, was made chairman of the marketing club committee, and Professor James Reddoch of the Business School was named chairman of the membership committee.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS MEET AT BILOXI

College Agricultural Economists will be well represented at the Southwestern Land Tenure and Southern Agricultural Workers meetings at Biloxi during the week of February 7-11. Professors Christian and Faught will read papers at the Agricultural Workers meeting, and Dr. R. J. Saville will preside at two sessions: one on "Cotton Mechanization" held by the Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology section of the Agricultural Workers group, and the other on "Cotton and Cotton Seed Marketing" held by the Marketing section of the Land Tenure group.

MISSISSIPPI STATE COLLEGE TO RECEIVE HISTORICAL MARKER

Dr. John K. Bettersworth, who is copy editor for the Mississippi Historical Commission, has announced that at the meeting of the Commission on January 14, it was decided that a special marker would be erected to mark Mississippi State College. This marker should be ready by mid-summer.

BETTERS WORTH TO SERVE ON PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF SOUTHERN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Dr. John K. Bettersworth has been invited to serve as a member of the program committee of the Southern Historical Association, which will convene in Atlanta next fall.

SNELLGROVE SPEAKS ON MEDIEVAL CHURCH

Dr. Harold S. Snellgrove, of the Department of History and Government, spoke on January 16 before the Women's Guild of the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection in Starkville. His subject was, "The Christian Church in the Middle Ages."

SAWYER APPOINTED TO PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF YMCA FACULTY LUNCHEONS

Professor R. T. Sawyer, of the Department of History and Government, will serve for the spring semester as a member of the program committee for the weekly faculty luncheon sponsored by the Mississippi State College YMCA.

BETTERS WORTH SPEAKS BEFORE MEN'S CLASSES

Dr. John K. Bettersworth spoke on Sunday, January 29, before the united men's classes of Starkville meeting in the Episcopal Church.

